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Magazine Sues U.S. Labor Party Over Impersonation of a Reporter

WASHINGTON, Aug. 19 (AP) — A \$1.5 million damage suit has been filed by U.S. News & World Report against the U.S. Labor Party, charging that affiliates of the party impersonated the magazine's White House reporter in interviews with news sources.

The suit said the chairman of the First National Bank of Boston and officials of the National Association of Home Builders had received telephone calls from a woman representing herself as Sara Fritz, a White House correspondent for the weekly magazine.

In a third instance, a man posing as a reporter for the magazine questioned a staff member of the Senate Select Committee on Ethics about two of its investigators, the complaint said.

The suit was filed Wednesday against the New Solidarity International Press Service and Campaigner Publications, both affiliated with the U.S. Labor Party, which was founded by Lyndon H. Larouche Jr., a three-time candidate for the Presidency.

Two Publications Named

Court papers filed in the lawsuit said the publications American Labor Beacon and Executive Intelligence Review, affiliated with the U.S. Labor Party, had carried articles containing information provided as a result of the impersonations.

In New York, a man who identified himself as Sandy Roberts, a member of the legal staff of New Solidarity International Press Service, said he had no immediate comment on the suit.

The suit seeks an injunction on the ground of trademark infringement, unfair competition and damage to Miss Fritz's reputation. It asks for punitive and compensatory damages of \$750,000 for the magazine and the reporter.

In a sworn statement, Miss Fritz said she was called last Feb. 11 by the First National Bank of Boston about an interview that Richard D. Hill, the bank chairman, had given a woman who said she was Miss Fritz. A distorted account of the interview later appeared in American Labor Beacon under the byline of Katherine Burdman, she said.

The bank gave Miss Fritz the New York City telephone number the woman had furnished.

"I called this number and asked to speak to Sara Fritz of U.S. News & World Report," she said in the court papers. "My call was transferred, and when a woman answered, I asked, 'Is this Sara Fritz?'"

"She replied, 'Yes.' I then asked, 'Of U.S. News & World Report?' She responded by asking, 'Who is this?' and when I identified myself as being from U.S. News & World Report, she abruptly terminated the call."

Miss Fritz said that she had traced the call to Campaigner Publications.

Last September, the court papers said, the call was made to the Senate Select Committee on Ethics.

Four months later, Miss Fritz said, she learned she had been impersonated again by someone who got information from the National Association of Home Builders. A distorted account of that interview was published in Executive Intelligence Review under the Burdman byline, she said.